

# PEARSALL MEETS HIS WIFE'S UNCLE

## Family Matters Settled After a Poker Game at Old Man Greenlaw's.

By DAVID A. CURTIS.

The stranger who entered old man Greenlaw's little saloon in Arkansas City one evening proved to the satisfaction of the old man, after some little conversation, that he was not in fact a stranger, but an acquaintance of long standing, having been one of the regular customers of the man who owned the tavern in Greenville, Miss., at the time when old man Greenlaw kept bar for him in bygone years.

It is true that there was some little difficulty in establishing this fact to old man Greenlaw's satisfaction when the acquaintance was claimed after the lapse of so many years. The old man's habitual caution prompted him to scrutinize with great care the claim of any one, and any one who professed to have known him at a former time.

The man from Greenville, however, did succeed after having bought several times in recalling himself to old man Greenlaw's recollection, and the latter set him up as a friendly acquaintance, although he was more or less perfunctory, betokening no enthusiasm whatever. The Greenville person, however, who recalled himself as Buck Murdock, had a prosperous appearance, and the old man, who had been told that the man he had certainly known by that name had been somewhat noted for sporting proclivities in his youth, so that it was in a quite hopeful manner that he introduced Mr. Murdock to some of the regular frequenters of the saloon who came in staidly at intervals.

These introductions were acknowledged in due form by Mr. Murdock, who successively invited Joe Bassett, Jim Blaisdell and Jake Winterbottom to join him and the old man in the successive rounds that ensued, so that things were going on as friends, feeling, not to say jovial, when there came a pause.

Mr. Sam Pearsall had not yet arrived, and Mr. Murdock's habit of having been mentioned, it was remembered by the others that Mr. Pearsall's relative, a Greenville girl, was somewhat pronounced, so that it was a matter of uncertainty whether or not he would assume a tolerant or a hostile attitude toward the stranger when he should be introduced.

The question was more important than it might seem to be. Under the guidance of the old man things were being gradually shaped up in a way that would naturally lead to the inauguration of a friendly game of poker in the back room of the saloon. It was advisable for some reasons to wait the arrival of Mr. Pearsall before beginning the game, as Mr. Winterbottom had heard the mention of Greenville, he looked doubtful and after a little thought seemed to become apprehensive. He remembered that the others seemed not to have thought of that Pearsall had married a Greenville girl, and he thought, though he was not quite certain, that the girl's name had been Murdock.

Presently he exchanged meaning looks with the old man, and went out. Meeting Mr. Pearsall a little distance from the saloon, he halted him for a conversation.

"Sam," he said, "there is some prospect of a game."

"Good!" said Pearsall. "Who's the sucker?"

"Says his name's Murdock."

"Good!" said Pearsall. "Anybody that goes by that name I ought to be let up on. 'Taint' one of the Greenville Murdocks, is it?"

"That's what," said Winterbottom. "Says he's a Greenville Murdock."

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# INQUESTS ON BIDS AT ROYAL AUCTION

## Common Faults of Beginners in Arriving at a Declaration.

By R. F. FOSTER.

It is rather interesting to observe the manner in which the text books on any game follow along certain grooves and take it for granted that certain things must be learned not only in a certain way, but in a particular order.

All golf books start with the drive, instead of the putt. Books on swimming all begin with the breast stroke, instead of how to float. Books on bridge start with the declarations on individual suits, instead of the difference in value between plain suits and trumps.

In the bids themselves there is a classification that is seldom sufficiently insisted upon, and that is the difference between bids built up by the partners alone, the opponents having 210 things to say, and bids made in the face of opposing declarations.

It is seldom that an original one trick bid but the dealer gets the trick, except at no trumps. The partner's bid is usually a moderating factor, or the declarations of the opponents form an obstruction.

It would undoubtedly simplify matters for the beginner and give him a much clearer insight into the true value of hands if all the declarations could be confined to the dealer's side for the first dozen rubbers or so. If things went wrong, there would be no one but themselves to blame, and the weak spot in the bidding could be easily found.

Nothing is more confusing to the beginner than the modifications required by opposing declarations. He is told that he must never assist his partner if he has none of the opponent's suit, and on the next hand he is told that holding part of the suit is the very reason why he should assist.

He is told that if his partner bids a heart and he has none, he should bid something else, but that if he has one, he should bid a heart. He is told that if he has one, he should bid a heart, but that if he has two, he should bid a heart.

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# PROBLEMS FOR 'SUN' READERS TO SOLVE

## Interesting Situations in Bridge, Checkers and Mathematics.

Bridge problem No. 388 is a good illustration of the not infrequent case of a player being able to shut out a small trump in the hands of the opponents by trumping his partner's winning cards.

This would force down the sacrifice of the small trump. The distribution follows:

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# THE NEW CHECKER PROBLEM

## In answer to general inquiries from those anxious to become members of THE SUN Checker Club the conditions are here given:

The new series of ten problems will begin with No. 401 and end with No. 410. All solutions must reach the office of THE SUN not later than the morning of the second Thursday after the problem appears. This gives all clear days for the solver and allows time enough to examine the solutions carefully in order to see that they have grasped the idea, even if they miss a variation or two.

Those who send in correct solutions to the whole series of ten consecutive problems rank as experts and receive white membership cards in THE SUN Checker Club. Those who solve nine only get red cards. Those who solve eight only get blue cards and those who solve three only get green cards. This is without regard to which problems are missed. All who hold their place during the next series, and continue to get white cards, get stars after three years. When there is only one left who has held his place right along he is the champion for the season.

At the close of the last honor list 400 players had tried for membership cards, and more than 100 had succeeded in getting some color or other. The rivalry for the championship has been a keen one, and without resulting in a decided advantage in favor of any one player so far.

In answer to several requests, here is the original of the position shown in No. 397. Solvers will find it requires very different treatment from its offspring:

PROBLEM NO. 397. CHECKERS. By the late E. Hull. Black.

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